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A  
LETTER  
FROM A  
MINISTER  
Of the  
*Church of England*  
TO A DISSENTING  
Parishioner  
OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN  
PERSWASION.

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*The Fifth Edition.*

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**LETTER**  
 From a MINISTER  
 Of the  
*Church of England*  
 To a Dissenting PARISHIONER  
 Of the  
*Presbyterian Perswasion.*

NEIGHBOUR,

**I** Hope you will take my Word so far as to Believe me, when I assure you, that the only motive, which hath induced me to apply my self in this manner to you, is my Earnest and Hearty Desire of your Spiritual and Eternal Welfare, which I cannot but think you greatly hazard by your Separation from our True and Established Church.

Could you Separate from our Communion without Sinning thereby, you should for me have been let Alone to follow your own Inclinations. But for as much as I well know, that, whilst you thus Please your self, you most highly Displease God; I am therefore bound, as your Spi-

ritual Watchman, to give you timely and plain notice of the Fatal danger you expose your self to, by being a Separatist.

That you are not your self Apprehensive of your being in any such danger, is not a sufficient Argument that you are not so. Sure I am, that common Prudence obliges a man, when he is soberly forewarned of any danger attending him, not immediately to slight the Warning, because he himself doth not see the Danger, but on the contrary to look carefully about him, and to enter upon a strict Examination, whether his condition be so safe and secure as he takes it to be, and to this end impartially to weigh whatever is offered to convince him, that he is not out of Danger.

I am therefore willing to think, that mere common Prudence will so far prevail upon you, as to give this paper the Reading more than Once, and Seriously to consider the Several Particulars therein contained: and that the Contents may be the more Effectual to the Good of your Soul, I must desire you not to fail before and at the Reading thereof, humbly and earnestly to beg of God, that by his Grace he would remove from you, whatever may prove an Hindrance to your clear and right understanding of the Arguments, which are here made use of to discover to you the Sinfull Error you are in, and to prevent the sad and fatal Consequences thereof.

I shall reduce what I have to offer under these Heads:

1. I shall prove, that You are indispensably obliged to follow the Rules and Directions of Such, as are duely authorized to be the Governours of that part of the Christian Church which is within this Kingdom, and that in All things by them required of you which are not Sinfull.

2. I shall prove, that the Governours of that part of the Christian Church which is within this Kingdom, are (so far forth as concerns the Controversy between us and you) Those we now adays call Bishops.

3. I shall prove, that nothing Sinfull is required of you by the Governours of our Church: whence it will follow,





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low, that there can be no warrantable Excuse or Argument for your refusing to observe the Rules of our Church, and for your withdrawing on that Account from your Parish Congregation.

4. As a further Confirmation of the Unwarrantableness of your Separation, I shall shew the weakness of the Objections and Pleas made use of by you or your Party.

5. And then I shall in the last place earnestly exhort you from the Consideration of what hath been laid before you, to Repent of your Great and Heinous Sin, and not to suffer any Temporal or Selfish Considerations to keep you from Acknowledging your Error, and from Reconciling your self to the Church, and thereby through the Head thereof, Christ Jesus, to God.

I. I am to prove, that you are under an indispensable Obligation to follow the Rules and Directions of such as are duely authorized to govern that part of the Christian Church, which is within this Nation, and that in All things by them required of you, which are not Sinfull.

I might urge Several Texts to this Purpose, but think it very sufficient to mention only One, as being full and plain in reference to the Case before us. I mean *1st. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves* &c. which Precept that it is to be understood of Obedience and Submission to Spiritual Rulers, is evident from the following part of the Verse, *for they watch for your Souls &c.* So that from this Text it appears,

1<sup>st</sup>. That in the Catholick or Universal Church and consequently in (every distinct Part thereof, that is,) every National Church there are some, whose Office it is to Rule, and therefore among other things to give Rules and Directions concerning all Circumstances relating to the Church, that are left Undetermined by Christ and his Apostles. And indeed I desire any one to give a more Rational and true Account, why so many, and those not inconsiderable Circumstances relating to the Church were not determined and settled by Christ and

his Apostles, than this, *viz.* that the Wisdom of God well knew, that on Account of the great Diversity of Customs in different Countries, and of Affairs in different Ages, it would be by far most expedient for the Good of the Church to leave such Circumstances to be from time to time ordered and appointed by the respective Rulers thereof within their respective Jurisdictions, accordingly as they should Judge most proper and convenient, in reference to the different Customs of the different Countries, and the different posture of Affairs in the different Ages, wherein they should live.

And for the further Confirmation of this Point, and your clearer understanding the Necessity of Believing and Allowing Church-Governours to have full Authority to give Rules and Directions in all Circumstances relating to the Church, and not settled by Christ and his Apostles, I shall descend to instance in such Circumstances as appertain to Divine Worship.

You know that St. Paul has given this General Rule in reference to Divine Worship, *Let all things be done Decently and in Order*, 1 Cor. 14. 40. But no particular Rules relating to the several Circumstances of Decency and Order are to be expressly met with in the Scriptures; and therefore it necessarily follows, Either that Christ and his Apostles have been Deficient in not making and leaving behind them such Rules, as are requisite to the Decency and Order of Divine Worship, or else that they have made due Provision for the same some other way; Namely, by leaving a full Authority to be transmitted through the several Ages of the Church to certain Persons, who should thereby be duely Authoriz'd to make all such Rules, as should be requisite for the Decent and Orderly performance of Divine Worship. I have so much charity for you, Neighbour, as to think you will not abett and maintain so wicked an assertion, as that Christ and his Apostles have not duely provided for the Decency and Order of Religious Worship; and therefore you must assent to the Truth of the Latter Consequence, that the Rulers (of the Catholick Church, and consequently of Every distinct

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strict part thereof, that is,) of every National Church, have good and full Authority to make Such Canons or Rules, as they shall judge requisite to the end of having Divine Worship Decently and Orderly performed, and by consequence to direct the People how they are to behave themselves, through the Several Parts of Divine Service; when they are to Kneel, when to Stand, when to Bow, &c.

And by the like Argument it may be proved, that Church Governours have full power to order, how the Minister shall behave himself during each part of Divine Service, as also what Prayers he shall make use of, what Habit he shall officiate in, &c.

Again, by the Same Sort of Argument it will follow, that the Rulers of the Church have full Power to appoint Holy-Days; as also to make and appoint all Such Officers (even over and above those appointed by Christ and his Apostles) as they shall judge convenient for the well-governing of the Church, and consequently to make Arch-Bishops, Arch-Deacons, Chancellors, Officials, Apparitors, &c.

As therefore it appears from what has been said, that there are in the Church Persons, whose Office it is to Rule, and therefore to Order and appoint All Circumstances appertaining to the Church, and not determined by Christ and his Apostles, so from what follows it will appear also,

2dly. That All Other Christians are bound in Conscience to Obey and Submit to the said Rulers of the Church.

This is no other than the plain and express Importance of the fore-mentioned *Heb. 13. 17.* and that the Obedience and Submission required in the said Text is to extend to All such Rules and Orders of Church-Governours, as are not Sinfull, will evidently appear from the following Considerations.

It is an undeniable and self-evident Truth, that the Notion of a Ruler doth necessarily suppose some to be



under his Rule; and therefore it follows, that as far as the Power of the Ruler doth extend on one side, so far on the other side is to be extended the Obedience of those that are under his Rule. Since therefore it hath been proved above, that Church-Governours have full power to make Rules concerning all Circumstances relating to the Church, which are not predetermined in Scripture: it will necessarily follow, that all other Members of the Church are bound to yield Obedience to all such their Rules and Determinations.

Again, the fore-mentioned *Heb. 13. 17.* hath no Limitation annexed, whereby the Obedience therein required is restrained only to such matters as are determined by Christ and his Apostles; neither can such a Limitation be inferred from any other Text: and therefore no reason can be given, why the Obedience we are speaking of should be understood in a restrained Sense.

Further, it is to be considered, that no Christian can reasonably be supposed to scruple giving Obedience to what is expressly commanded by Christ and his Apostles; and therefore if the Obedience required in the fore-cited *Heb. 13. 17.* is to be understood to extend no further than to what is so expressly commanded in the Scriptures, then there seems to have been no Occasion left for the Inspired Writer to give any such Precept. On this Account, it is much more Rational to suppose, that the Inspired Writer foreseeing that in after Ages some might arise, who (out of humour, or perverseness, or the like) might refuse to obey the Rulers of the Church in such things as were not determined in the Scripture, therefore thought it absolutely necessary to give Directions Suitable to this case, & expressly to require all Christians to Obey their Church-Rulers without Any such Limitation, that is, in things Not determined in the Scriptures, as well as those that are Determined.

Nay, that the Obedience to Church-Rulers required in the aforesaid Text, is to be understood Principally and Chiefly in reference to things determined only by their Authority, may be farther argued from Propriety of Speech.

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And this will appear from the Distinctions made use of by St Paul, 1 Cor. 7. For Verse 10, where he delivers what was by our Saviour himself enjoyned to Married Persons, having at first said, *Unto the Married I command*, he presently recalls himself as having Spoken less accurately, and Subjoyns, *yet not I*, (that is, in strict propriety of Speech, not I) *but the Lord*. And in like manner, V. 12. he says, *But to the rest Speak I*, (that is, more properly, I,) *not the Lord*, viz. by any express Command or Determination in Scripture. Now according to this Distinction founded on Propriety of Speech, and observed by St. Paul himself, it will follow in respect to the Case before us, that to observe or do what is expressly commanded in Scripture, is to obey God himself, and not (Properly) the Rulers of the Church; and that we can then only be said to obey (Properly) the Church-Rulers themselves, when we observe or do somewhat commanded by Them, though it be not commanded in Scripture. And therefore the Obedience required Heb. 13. 17. must in Propriety of Speech be understood Principally & Chiefly in reference to Such things as are determined (not by the Scripture, but) by the Canons or Directions of the Church-Rulers.

There is still remaining one Consideration more, which will further confirm the Truth of what I am proving, and which is contained expressly in the Text so often cited, Heb. 13. 17. wherein it is said not only, *obey them that have the Rule over you*, but also 'tis further added, *and submit your selves*. Now we are then properly said to *submit our selves*, to those that have the Rule over us, when though we think we have reason not to like what is commanded, yet out of Deference and due Respect to Authority we submit our own Judgements and Opinions to that of our Governours, and yield Obedience to the thing commanded, though we cannot cordially approve of it. Such is the Genuine meaning of Submission in General, and therefore when we are bid in the fore-cited Text to *Submit our selves* to the Rulers of the Church, 'tis the same as if the Holy Pen-Man had said thus: "Though it may sometimes happen, that the Rulers of the Church may  
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"enjoy such things, as some Members of the Church may  
 "not like of in their own Opinions; yet it is the Duty of  
 "all such Members of the Church, to Submit their Judge-  
 "ments to the Judgements of their Rulers, and to com-  
 "ply with their Injunctions by an Actual and Punctual  
 "Obedience." And surely such a Submission is no less  
 than what is absolutely necessary to preserve the Peace of  
 the Church, which as it is of the highest consequence  
 to the Churches Welfare, so cannot but be quickly broken,  
 if every one should be left free to follow his own Pri-  
 vate Judgement and Opinion in matters not determined  
 in the Scriptures. Hence it cannot be rationally doubted,  
 but Christ hath taken due care for the Preservation of  
 the Churches Peace, namely, by not leaving it to every  
 private Person to follow his own Judgment and Humour  
 in Religious matters, but by strictly commanding him  
 to *obey and submit* to the Rulers of the Church in all  
 things relating to Religion, which are not determined in  
 Scripture: I say in All things; for the Precept is with-  
 out any Limitation, either exprest in the Text, or to be  
 inferred from any other Text, saving only that General  
 Limitation, which is required by the Analogy of Faith to  
 be always supposed, and which excludes only Such Things  
 as are Sinfull.

And therefore I have thus largely proved the First Head  
 above laid down: namely, that you are Indispensably  
 obliged to follow the Rules and Directions of Such as  
 are duely Authorized to govern that part of the Christian  
 Church which is within this Kingdom, and that in All  
 things by them required of you which are not Sinfull.

II. I proceed now to the Second Head above laid  
 down: namely to prove, that the Governours of that  
 Part of the Christian Church which is within this King-  
 dom, are (so far forth as concerns the Controversy between  
 us and you) Those we now adays call Bishops.

That Christ did leave the Government of his Church  
 to his Apostles, is so evident from Scripture, as not to  
 be denied by any Sober man. And that the Order of  
 Apostles

Apostles was distinct from what we now call the Order of Presbyters or Priests, and the same with what we now call the Order of Bishops, is fairly to be gathered from the New Testament it self, and is evident beyond all Contradiction both from the Writings of the Primitive Christians (particularly of *Ignatius*, who lived and conversed with the Apostles of our Saviour, and therefore must be supposed perfectly to Understand the Form of Government, which they established in the Church) as also from the Concurrent Practice of the Catholick or Universal Church, which all along from the Apostles time quite down to the Reformation preserved the three distinct Orders of the Ministry, and was every where governed by *Bishops*. Insomuch that a *Presbyterian Government* was never heard of in the Church till after the Reformation; which Blessed Work when the Devil could not hinder, he made use of all his Cunning to blast the Fruits thereof: and he did it in no respect more than in violating the Apostolical Form of Church Government till that time universally received, and thereby Breaking the Peace of the Church to this very day.

Since therefore our Blessed Saviour left the Government of the Church to his Apostles; and since those only, whom we now call Bishops are of the Apostolical Order, and so succeed the Apostles in their Office and the Government of the Church: it necessarily follows, that only the Bishops of this our Kingdom can, according to the Institution of Christ and his Apostles, be the true Governors of that Part of the Christian Church which is within this Kingdom.

I might enlarge a great deal more on the Proof of this Point; but that I have somewhat experienced, that after the greatest Evidence that can be desired from Antiquity in this case, there is at last an Evasion ready to be made use of by you: namely, that you are not Scholar enough to enter into the Merits of this Controversy, and so to be able to determine for your self by your own Judgment. Well, what then is the true Consequence of this? Is it not, that you ought, in all such Cases too difficult for your



your self to determine, to betake your self to him who is appointed by God to be your Immediate Guide in all Religious matters, that is, to your Parish-Minister? For it having been shewn, that the Bishops are those, to whom the Government of this National Church is committed according to the Institution of Christ and his Apostles; 'twill follow, that whosoever is duely appointed to be your Minister by your Proper Bishop, is in effect appointed to be so by Christ Himself; and consequently to Neglect and Forsake such your Minister, is to affront the Authority of Christ Himself. Whence you may learn, that in respect to the Church 'tis no more left to your own Will or Choice, whom you will look upon as your True Pastor or Minister, than in respect to the State 'tis left to your own Will or Choice, whom you will look upon as your Constable &c. but as He that is duely appointed by the Civil Magistrate to be the Constable of your Parish, is to be acknowledged as your Constable: so He that is duely appointed by the proper Spiritual Magistrate to be the Minister of your Parish, is to be acknowledged on all accounts as your Minister or Pastor, and as such is to be your Guide in Spiritual Matters. Wherefore I shall close the Head I am now upon with this Consideration, which (if duely weigh'd) cannot but convince you, that 'tis at least more safe for you to have recourse to your own Minister in all Doubtfull and Difficult Cases, and to be by him guided therein, than to resort to any other Person at least without his Advice or Approbation. Pray then consider with your self, that supposing the very Worst should happen to you, which can possibly happen, by following the Directions of your own Minister: namely, that your Minister should misguide you in a matter too difficult for your self to judge of; yet you may then very reasonably Rely on God's Mercy for the forgiveness of your Error in this case, because you make use of the proper means appointed by God for your Instruction, and so the Error becomes not properly Yours, but your Minister's. Whereas on the other hand whilst you suffer your self to be thus misled by a Teacher of your own choosing, you can have no man-



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ner of reason to expect God's Mercy in forgiving your Sinfull Error, for as much as it arises from your own Presumption in taking upon you to make choice of your own Guide, and from your refusing to follow the Directions of him, who is appointed by God to be your Spiritual Guide. And surely One Sin is so far from Excusing, that it must necessarily Aggravate any Other Sins consequent thereupon; your Disobedience to God in forsaking your true Minister cannot excuse, but on the contrary will encrease the Sinfullness of any Error you fall into by such a Disobedience; and such an Error becomes your own Error, because you will take upon you to choose him, who thus misleads you, to be your Spiritual Guide.

III. I proceed now to the Third Head above undertaken to be made out unto you, which is to shew, That Nothing Sinfull is required of you by the Bishops or Governours of our Church, and therefore that there can be no warrantable Excuse or Argument for your refusing to Observe the Rules of our Church, or for your withdrawing on that Account from your Parish-Congregation. And this matter will take up no long time to be proved. For St. John assures us, that nothing is Sin, but what is a Transgression of the Law of God, 1 John 3. 4. but now the Rulers of our Church require nothing of you, that is a Transgression of God's Law; and therefore they require nothing of you, that is Sinfull.

'Tis needless to stand reckoning up all the Particulars relating to our Church Communion, when all that I can or need say of them, is, that there is not Any One of them which is against any Precept in the whole Scripture; and consequently there is not Any One of them which is Sinfull: No, neither wearing of the Surplice, nor Bowing at the Name of Jesus or towards the Altar, nor Kneeling particularly at the Sacrament, nor the Cross in Baptism, nor a Set Form of Prayer, nor any other Particular relating to our Church-Communion, is any where forbid in Scripture; and therefore Each and All of them may be enjoyed and commanded by the Rulers of our Church,  
by

By Virtue of the Authority entrusted with them to determine and appoint all Matters left undetermined by Christ and his Apostles.

What Excuse therefore or Argument can be left for your Separation from our Church, and whence can it proceed but from Ignorance, Humour or Obstinacy? I know indeed, that you are wont to make many Objections against our Church, and to make use of Some Pleas in Defence of your Separation; Wherefore

IV. As a further Confirmation of the Unwarrantableness of your Separation, I proceed in the next place to shew the Weakness of Such Objections and Pleas, as are made use of by you or your Party.

*Obj. 1.* I shall begin with those Objections you draw from Texts of Scripture misunderstood or at least misapplied; of which sort the first I shall mention is *Mat. 15. 9.* *But in vain they do worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* Now this Text is generally urged by your Writers against observing the Rules and Orders of our Church, as being the Commandments of Men, or (in the Common Language) Humane Ordinances. But with how little Reason this Text is thus wrested by your Party against the Rules of our Church, will quickly appear. For if you consult the former part of the Chapter, you will find that our Saviour is therein Speaking only against such Traditions or Commandments of Men, as did *transgress the Commandments of God*, *vers. 3.* and *make the Commandments of God of none effect*, *verse 6.* But do's it therefore follow, that Christ forbids us to observe such Commandments of Men, as do not transgress the Law of God? 'Tis readily granted to you, that if the Rules of our Church do transgress the Commandments of God, (as did those of the Jews spoken against by our Saviour in this Place) then they ought not to be obeyed by you: But because none of the Rules of our Church do any ways transgress the Commandments of God, therefore it follows, that they are not such Commandments of Men, as are forbidden.

den by Christ to be observed and obeyed. Again, Christ rebukes the Jews for teaching such their Traditions for *Doctrines*, that is, making them of Equal Obligation and Necessity with the Commandments of God. And what is that to the Rules of our Church, which we do by no means teach for Doctrines, that is, to be of Equal Obligation with the Commandments of God: for as much as the Commandments of God are for ever Unchangeable by the Rulers of our Church; whereas the Rules of our Church are allowed to be Changeable by our Church-Rulers, when they shall think fit and proper so to do according to the Circumstances of Times and Affairs.

To this you may reply; that if the Rites and Ceremonies enjoyed by our Church are not of Equal Obligation and Necessity with the Commands of God, why then is the Observation of them so much Insisted upon, and why are they not rather Altered and Taken away, that so the Dissenters may joyn Communion with us? Many and very good Reasons may be assigned for the Same. What though the Commandments of a Father are not of Equal Obligation and Necessity with the Commandments of God, yet may not the Father for all this justly Insist upon his Children's giving Obedience to his Commands? Nay, is it not much more fitting, that the Children should comply with the Commands of their Father, than the Father alter or revoke his Commands, only to comply with the Humour and Perverseness of his Children? And the Case is just the same between the Rulers of our Church, and those that Dissent from the Church; for as much as the Rulers of our Church are Spiritual Fathers, and the Dissenters are so many Untoward Children, who refuse due Obedience without any good ground. Moreover the great Reason suggested in this Objection for Altering, or Taking away our Ceremonies is the Gaining of Dissenters thereby; but now in reality you must own this to be no other than a mere Sham or Pretence. For I desire to know, what Dissenters will be gained to our Church by such a Method alone? We must take away not only Ceremonies but also the Sacraments, before the Quaker will joyn



joyn with us: We must take away not only Ceremonies, but also Infant-Baptism, before the Anabaptist will joyn with us: We must take away not only Ceremonies, but also the whole Order of Bishops, before the Presbyterian and Independent will joyn with us: and therefore, pray Neighbour, what sort of Dissenters is to be gained, only by Altering and Taking away our Ceremonies? Pray what is become of your Specious Argument for Altering our Present Constitution out of hopes of Gaining Dissenters, when you see that (if they be sincere and true to their Principles) none of them are to be Gained only by changing such Rites and Ceremonies, as are of Humane Institution?

And now pray consider, what is become of the Objection, with which you are wont to make such an Outcry against our Ceremonies; *viz.* that they are only Humane Ordinances? how quickly is All the Force of this Objection quite broken and took away, only by shewing that the Text made use of by you to this purpose, do's by no means signifie what you would have it? For you may see from what hath been said, that our Saviour forbids the Observance only of Such Humane Ordinances as are inconsistent with the Law of God: All other Humane Ordinances (made by due Authority either in Church or State) are according to Scripture to be conscientiously and strictly obeyed and submitted to, by all such who are under the said Authority: and consequently the Dislike of such Humane Ordinances by those who should obey them, can by no means be a good Argument for their being Altered or Taken away.

Obj. 2. Another Text made use of by your Party is, Col. 2. 18. and 23. For from thence you are wont to infer, that 'tis unlawfull to comply with the Rites and Ceremonies of our Church, because they are so many Acts or Circumstances of *Will-Worship*. But now it will appear, that this Text likewise is altogether misapplied by you, and makes nothing against the Observation of our Ceremonies. For the Voluntary Humility or Worshipping



ing there spoken against, is that which was paid by some of the Antient Hereticks to Angels, as is plain from the exprefs words of the Text, *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a Voluntary Humility and Worshipping of Angels.* And therefore how is this Text against our Ceremonies? Doth any One of our Rites or Ceremonies tend any ways to the Worshipping of Angels or any Creature whatever? You cannot say it. If therefore all the Worship which is exprest by our Ceremonies, be directed only and immediately to God the proper Object of our Worship, then there can be no hurt in them, though they are Voluntary: nay on the contrary, we learn from many Instances of Scripture, that the more Voluntary any Acts of our Religious Worship are, so much the more Acceptable are they to God. Moreover, there is no danger of your being guilty of Will-Worship (were it a Sin) by complying with the Rules of our Church, for as much as thereby you will do only what is Commanded you by your Rulers, and that only out of bounden Duty to them, and not of your own Will or Choice; and consequently your Compliance with the Rules of our Church after such a manner cannot possibly be Will-Worship in you. And thus you may see, that the fore-cited Text concerning Will-Worship doth by no means belong to your Case, and therefore can by no means be any Justification for your refusing to observe the Rites & Ceremonies of our Church.

Obj. 3. Another Text objected by you is, *1 Theß. 5. 19. Quench not the Spirit*: whence you infer, that you cannot approve of Forms of Prayer, because they tend in your Opinion to Quench the Spirit, i. e. according to your Interpretation of the words, to restrain or hinder the Exercise of the Gift of Prayer. I ask therefore, In whom do set Forms of Prayer Quench the Spirit? in the Minister or People? Surely, you cannot say in the People, because they are only to joyn with the Minister, and so are not themselves to make use of the Gift of Prayer in the Publick Congregations. And therefore their Spirit must be equally quenched or restrain'd, whether the Minister use

a set Form of Prayer or Extemporary Prayer. So that this Text can by no means warrant Your not Attending our Publick Prayers on any account of Your Own, You being of the Laity, and so in no more danger of having your Spirit Quenched by our set Forms, than they are and must be by the Extemporary Prayers of your Dissenting Teacher.

Well, but Forms of Prayer quench the Spirit, if not in the People, yet in the Minister. So you may think, but others, as understanding in these matters as you, think and know otherwise. Nay our Saviour himself (if his Authority will avail any thing with you) thought and knew the contrary: for surely he would never have prescribed a Form of Prayer to his Disciples had he known or thought, that it would quench the Spirit; and therefore our Saviour's prescribing a Form, is an undeniable Argument, that a Form doth not quench the Spirit.

That the Lord's Prayer was prescribed as a set Form to be exactly kept to and repeated, not only as a Directory or Pattern how to Pray, is evident from *Luke 11. 3.* *When ye pray, say* (that is, use these very words) *Our Father &c.* I know your Teachers endeavour to evade the force of this Argument by referring to *Mat. 6. 9.* where 'tis said, *After this manner pray ye, Our father &c.* For by the expression [After this manner] they would have understood, that our Saviour designed his Prayer only as a Directory or Pattern, shewing after what manner we ought to pray. But this is so poor an Evasion or shift, that it is owing to and founded on no better ground than Ignorance or unskilfulness in the Greek Tongue. For you are to be informed, that the Greek word (render'd in our Translation not exactly but Paraphrastically, *After this manner,*) doth properly signifie, and should with greater accuracy be render'd, *So* or *thus*. And then what will in effect be the Difference between St. Luke's expression, *When ye pray, say, Our Father &c.* and between that of St. Matthew, *Pray ye so or thus, Our Father &c.* Do not Both Expressions plainly denote, that the very Words of the Lord's Prayer were enjoyned by our Saviour to be kept

kept to, and consequently that the Lord's Prayer was designed by our Saviour to be a set Form; and not only a Directory or Pattern of Prayer?

What then is to be said next? why, after all, if Forms of Prayer do not Quench the Spirit, yet surely Praying by a Form cannot be Praying by the Spirit. I am very sensible, Neighbour, that you lay a mighty stress upon Praying by the Spirit, and that you are most miserably deceived by the Wrong Notion you have of it; and therefore in order to undeceive you (if possible) I shall give you this plain and full account of the matter. To Pray is used in two different Senses, sometimes to *Make a new Prayer*, sometimes to *Say a Prayer already made*. Now 'tis readily granted that to Pray by a Form is not to Pray by the Spirit in the first sense: namely, as it denotes to *Make a new Prayer* by the Spirit's assistance. But I desire to know, where it is required in Scripture, that we should thus Pray, that we should make a new Prayer, when we address our selves to God, even in Publick. Take care Neighbour, that this absurd Opinion doth not owe it's Birth to no better Principle, than the mere Corruption of your Nature: take care least, because you perceive your self to be most pleased with Novelty in Prayers as well as in other things, you are therefore apt to think, that God likewise is best pleased with New Prayers: for you must remember, that such a Notion of God as this, makes up part of the Character of a Wicked Man, *Psalms 50. v. 16, 21. But unto the wicked God says — Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy self.* Sure I am our Saviour thought that God was not in the least more delighted with any such Novelty in our Prayers, and therefore that there was no need of the Spirit's assistance to make new Prayers, when we present our Petitions to God: in as much as our Saviour has taught us, *When we pray, to say (the same Prayer, to wit,) Our Father &c.* And he did the like himself; for as we read that he prayed Thrice to have the Cup pass from him, so we read likewise that each of the three times he *prayed, saying the same words*; see *Mark 14. 19. compar'd with Mat. 26. 44.*



'Tis evident then both from the Direction and Practice of our Saviour, that God doth not require of us to Pray by the Spirit in this first Sense, and therefore that 'tis no Objection at all against Praying by Forms, that 'tis not in this Sense Praying by the Spirit. Besides, Neighbour, you should consider that even in your own Meetings no one can Pray by the Spirit in this Sense, but only the Teacher, because no one but he Makes the Prayers there used; the Rest can but attend to his Prayer, and they may attend as well (and much better) to a Form, and therefore in respect of you, who are only an Hearer, 'tis the same, whether a Prayer be made or a Form said. And thus I have sufficiently shewn the weakness of your Objection against Praying by Forms, because 'tis not Praying by the Spirit, as thereby is meant Making new Prayers by the Spirit.

I proceed now to the second Signification of Praying by the Spirit, wherein it denotes to say a Prayer already made by the Spirit's assistance. And in this Sense I am confident, that Praying by a Form may be the very same as Praying by the Spirit. For whosoever says a good Form of Prayer devoutly, prays by the Spirit: for as much as Devotion is owing to the Spirit's assistance. But now certainly you cannot deny, that a Man may Pray by a Form, and yet Pray devoutly: and therefore you cannot deny, but that a man may pray by a Form, and yet pray by the Spirit, even in the most requisite Sense, because in that Sense, which is absolutely necessary to render our Prayers acceptable to God: whereas Praying by the Spirit in the other Sense, as it denotes Making a new Prayer, is not (as I have above proved) necessary to render our Prayers acceptable. Wherefore I beseech you to consider, what you can desire more of a Prayer, than that it should be acceptable to God; and how Unreasonable are all your Scruples against Forms of Prayer, since 'tis not to be denied, but Forms may be used most acceptably to God.

Wherefore it necessarily follows from what has been said, that your Objections against Forms of Prayer, both as Quenching the Spirit, and also as not being Prayers by the

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the Spirit, are Groundless and False, and so can by no means be any Justification of your Separating from our Church.

And thus I might dismiss this Point, but that I am willing to give you all the Satisfaction I possibly can; and therefore I think fit here to take notice of another Cavil made use of by some of your Party, which is this: that if set Forms do not quench the Spirit, and may be used Acceptably to God; then it will however follow, that such as are able to read, may read Forms of Prayer themselves at Home, and not trouble themselves to come to Church, or at least that there is no Occasion for Ministers to read Prayers in the Church, since Others can do it as well as they. I answer, that neither of these Consequences do justly follow: For in matters relating to God's Worship, we must be carefull to do as God hath appointed us. Now God requires us to give him Publick Worship as well as Private, (as appears from many places of Scripture, particularly from *Lev. 23. verses 3, 7, 21, 24, 27, 36* in the Old Testament; and from *John 20. 19. Acts 2. 1, 46. and 3. 1. and 20. 7. Heb. 10. 25. &c.* in the New Testament) and therefore tho' a man may be able to read the Common Prayers of the Church at Home, yet that will by no means excuse him from attending the said Prayers, when used Publickly in the Church. Neither doth it follow, that there is no need of Ministers, or Persons peculiarly set apart, to read prayers in the Church, because that many Others can read them as well as they: for as much as God hath thought fit to require, that no one shall Minister or perform any such sacred office to him in the Church or Publick Congregation, but such as are peculiarly set apart to that end; (as may be seen in many other places of Scripture, but particularly *Heb. 5. verses 4. and 5.*) And perhaps the truth of this matter cannot be made clearer to you, than by putting you in mind of the like Case in respect to the Priests under the Law. It cannot be doubted, but that there were Many among the Other Tribes of the Israelites, that were as able to carry the Ark, and do such other Offices appertaining to the Tabernacle as the Levites were: and therefore according to

the above-mentioned way of Arguing, Others might carry the Ark &c. as well as the Levites, because they were as Strong and Able to do it as the Levites were. Whereas you read that God did not think fit to allow, that any Other but the Levites should have an hand in bearing the Ark &c. *Nom. 1. v. 50, 51, &c. Deut. 10. v. 8.* In like manner, tho' Others may be able to read Prayers Publickly as well as Ministers yet none but Ministers ought to read Prayers in the Church; because God hath commanded that none shall Minister to him, but such as are thus peculiarly set apart to his Service, as our Ministers are. And thus I have endeavoured to give you full satisfaction as to all your Objections against Forms of Prayer.

*Obj. 4.* There are likewise some Texts urged by you against the Observation of our Festivals or Holy-Days, as *Gal. 4. 10. Ye observe days &c. Col. 2. 16. Let no man judge you in respect of an Holy-day &c.* But pray, Neighbour, why are you wont to stop at Holy-day in the last Text, and not quote the whole Verse? why, the Reason is clear, because the remaining part of that Verse plainly shews, that the said Verse makes no more against Holy-days, than it doth against Sabbath-days: for the latter part of the Verse runs thus, *Let no man judge you — in respect of an Holy-day, or of the New moon, or of the Sabbath-days.* So in respect to *Gal. 4. 10.* 'tis undeniable that the Observation of Lord's-days is the Observation of days: and therefore this Text also makes no more against the Observation of Holy-days, than it doth against the Observation of Lord's-days. Since therefore you and your Party acknowledge, that, notwithstanding these Texts, a Man may be so far from being Blameable for observing our Lord's days or Sabbath-days, that he may and ought to be Judged for Not observing them; you must also acknowledge, that a Man may be so far from being Blameable for observing our Holy days, that he may and ought to be Judged for Not observing them.

Will you say, that we read in other places of Scripture, that the Apostles kept our Sabbath-days or Lord's-days, and  
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for this Reason these Texts are not to be understood against keeping our Sabbath-days? I reply, that in like manner we read in other places of Scripture, that the Apostles kept Festivals or Holy-days; and therefore (by your own way of arguing) these Texts are not to be understood against our Holy-days. Nay, I might further add, that, whereas there is no express Command or Direction for keeping our Sabbaths to be found in Scripture, there is an express Command or Direction to be found for keeping a Feast or Holy day, to wit, 1 Cor. 5. 8. *Therefore let us keep the Feast*, or (as the word may, and is rendered in the Margin of our Greater Bibles) *the Holy day*.

If you desire, Neighbour, to be informed, what then is the true meaning of these two Texts, *Gal. 4. 10.* and *Col. 2. 16.* which you have been taught to understand in a wrong Sense against our Holy-days, I will inform you. *St. Paul* blames the Galatians for observing Jewish Days, whether Holy-days or Sabbath-days, on a Jewish or wrong Principle, namely, as if the Law of Moses was still in force to oblige them thereunto. For that even Jewish Days, particularly Festivals, might be observed without blame, if they were so not on the fore-mentioned wrong Principle, is evident from *St. Paul's* own Practice, *Acts 18. 21.* This is the True cause of *St. Paul's* blaming the Galatians for observing Days: and now (Pray) consider how this can possibly make against us of the Church of England, since the Holy-days we observe, are neither Jewish Holy-days, nor observed by us on the Jewish wrong Principle above-mentioned. In like manner *St. Paul* tells the Colossians, that no man ought to judge them in respect of any Jewish Holy-day &c. but that they might without Sin either keep or not keep it, for as much as neither the one nor the other was actually enjoined them by Christ, or the Governours of the Christian Church. And what is this against our Holy-days? which are not Jewish ones, and which (though Indifferent, and so might or might not be kept in respect of their own nature, yet) are now to be kept by us, because they are actually enjoined by the Governours of our Church.



Tho' what hath been already said, is abundantly sufficient to shew the weakness of your Objection against our Holy-days; yet I cannot forbear putting the matter still more Home. You and your Party Religiously observe the Fast-days and Thanksgiving-days, appointed on account of or in relation to the Present War; Now, pray, why do you comply so readily with the Observation of these Fasts or Festivals, and yet scruple so much to observe other Fasts or Feasts? Surely the observing of these Fasts or Feasts, is the Observing of Days: surely these Fasts and Feasts are Holy-days, as much as other Fasts or Feasts; and are appointed by Divine Authority no more than the rest. And as for Humane Authority, these Fasts are appointed only by Proclamation, whereas All the stated Fasts and Feasts of our Church are appointed by Act of Parliament, which your Party thought about the year 1648. to be of much greater Authority than a Proclamation. And now what is the Necessary Consequence of such your Behaviour but this, *viz.* that either you are Really perswaded in your Consciences, that 'tis Sinfull to observe Days, and yet will observe the Fast-days and Thanksgiving-days in relation to the Present War, and offend God rather than offend the Civil Government; or else you are Not really perswaded in your Consciences, that 'tis sinfull to observe Days, but only Pretend so to be, in order to defend your Schism, and thus you become guilty of Insincerity and downright Hypocrisy?

*Obj. 5.* Another Objection taken from Scripture is against our Bishops being called *Lord Bishops*; for as much as it is said, *1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. Feed the Flock of God &c. — Neither as being Lords over God's Heritage.* I cannot here forbear plainly telling you, Neighbour, that I must think you either not Serious, when you thus apply this Text; or else very Ignorant, and very much Abused by your Teacher, whosoever He was that put this absurd Objection into your mouth. *To Lord it over God's Heritage* is undoubtedly a great Piece of Pride, and consequently a great Fault; and therefore how can you possibly think, that



that our Bishops would suffer themselves to be called Lord Bishops on so Base an account: for as much as the Title of Lords, if given them for this Reason, would be a mark not of Honour, but the greatest Reproach. And therefore let me beseech you, from this single Instance to take notice and consider, how grossly your Ignorance hath been abused by him who taught you this Argument. If you would be set right as to this matter, you are to know, that our Bishops are called Lord Bishops, not on account of their becoming so, merely by being Bishops; but because they are thereupon made also Peers and Lords of the Kingdom: and therefore strictly speaking, they are Lords only in a Civil Sense, the Reason of their being called Spiritual Lords being only to denote, that the said Lords are Spiritual Persons, and so to distinguish them from the others called Temporal Lords, who are not Spiritual Persons. To be short, I appeal to your own Conscience, whether you can think, that your own Teachers would become a whit the worse Teachers, if the Government should think fit to make them Lords. And this may abundantly suffice to shew you the Folly and absurdity of this Objection.

Obj. 6. But further by way of Objection against our Bishops you are wont to demand, whether *Presbyters* are not called *Bishops* in the New Testament, particularly *Phil. 1. 1.* and *1 Tim. 3. 1. &c.* Well, and what then? why then, doth it not follow that *Presbyters* and *Bishops* are One and the same Order? No, by no means, as I shall make plain by an Instance now adays familiar amongst us. Deacons as well as *Presbyters* are frequently called Curates and Ministers, and yet I suppose you will not allow that Deacons and *Presbyters* are one and the same Order, only because they have a name Common to them Both. In like manner it doth not follow, that *Presbyters* are of the same Order with those of the Apostolical Rank, only because they have Both the same Common name of *Bishops* applied to them in the New Testament. In short, you are to know that the great Doctrine, which the Church

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of England insists upon, is, that from the Times of the Apostles there have been Three distinct Orders in the Ministry: and this Doctrine stands Firm and Unalterable, however the Names given to some of these Orders may have been Altered. That the Name of Bishops was at the very first given promiscuously to the two Superior Orders, is not denied: but 'tis certain, that the name was appropriated only to the 3<sup>d</sup> or Apostolical Order in the very beginning of the Second Century, and therefore in a very short time after the Writings of the New Testament, and consequently in the very times of Those who conversed with the Apostles, and therefore could not but have a right Understanding as to these matters. And as what is here said concerning the Doctrine of the Church of England stands Firm and Unalterably true, in respect to the Three distinct Orders in the Ministry, notwithstanding the use of some Names given to some of the Orders may have been somewhat Altered: So likewise the same Doctrine stands Unalterably true, notwithstanding any Alterations that have been or may be made, in respect to the extent of Jurisdiction or Diocesses of those several Persons of the Apostolical Order, which we now adays call Bishops. For Diocesses may be wider or narrower: many Parishes or Counties, and but single Counties, but parts of a County, but single Parishes; and yet All this will make no Alteration, as to the Real Distinction between the Three Orders in the Ministry, which is All that the Church of England insists upon, and which is really true from the Universal consent of Antiquity. Inasmuch that the same Doctrine hath been acknowledged to be True by the most Judicious and Learned men that ever your own Party had. I could add a great deal more upon this Subject, was your Education such as render'd you capable to judge thereof: for which reason I have confined my self to such Arguments, as I thought level to your capacity, and which are sufficient to convince you of the Weakness and Absurdity of those Objections, which you make use of against our Episcopal Government.

Obj. 7. Proceed we next to that Text urged by you for Liberty of Conscience in Religious matters, to wit, *Gal. 3. 1. Stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.* Now you are to know, that the Liberty here spoken of, relates only to the yoke or bondage of the Levitical Law, from which indeed Christ hath made us free, and do's not denote any Freedom allowed you by Christ for doing what you will, in reference to Religious matters under the Gospel. No, on the quite contrary, as Christ hath set us at Liberty from the Bondage of the Law, so hath he required our strictest Obedience to such as he hath appointed to Rule and Govern his Church under the Gospel, as I have above largely proved from *Heb. 13. 17.* As to that other Text sometimes urged to this same purpose, *1 Theß. 5. 21. Prove all things,* I might shew how the design of the Apostle is quite misunderstood by such as thus apply it; I might shew, how the greatest wickedness as well as Errors may thereby be justified, if these words are so to be understood, as to give leave to try and experiment All things: but I pass over this, because All that can be objected from these words, are fully answered by the remaining part of the Verse, *Hold fast that which is Good.* For, I have shewn that in order to *Hold fast that which is Good,* you must Obey and submit your selves to those that have Rule over you in the Church of Christ, and consequently must not Separate your self from their Communion.

Obj. 8. The last Text that remains to be taken notice of, as capable of being misapplied by you, is *Rom. 14. 23. Whatever is not of Faith, is Sin.* Whence you may perhaps argue, that it being not of Faith in you, that is, it being contrary to your Perswasion or Judgement, to joyn Communion with us; it would therefore be a Sin in you to Do it, and consequently for that Reason (if for no other) you ought to Abstain from our Communion. Now I desire you, Neighbour, to consider, that if this Text is so to be understood as you would have it, viz. that any Man's Private Perswasion (how groundless soever) of a thing's



thing's being Sinfull, do's entirely Excuse him from doing the thing, then by this Text a Papist, nay a Jew, nay a very Heathen may Justifie his manner of Worship, as well as you justifie thereby your Separation. For either the Papist, or the Jew, or the Heathen may urge, that he is verily Perswaded in his Conscience, that he ought not to change his Religion. And thus you may see what a weak Pretence this Text affords you for your Separation; since 'tis altogether as Good a Defence for Popery, Judaism and downright Heathenism. In short, the Scripture is given us to be the Rule of Faith, and therefore your Faith is to be entirely guided and directed thereby; and consequently whenever your Faith or Perswasion is not agreeable to the Scriptures, it becomes Sinfull: and this is the very Case as to your Separation. For the Scriptures oblige you to Submit to the Governours of the Church in All things Not Sinfull; and therefore for you to be Perswaded, that you are not to Submit to them in things not Sinfull, is it self a very great Sin. If you desire to know, what then is the true Import of the Text thus misapplied by you, you are to consider on what Occasion the Words were spoken by *St. Paul*, which was in reference to such Particulars as were not determined, either by the Scriptures or the Governours of the Church, but were left to every Man's own Private Determination: And in this Case the Rule given by the Apostle holds very good and true, and is to be carefully observed, Every Man being bound not to do in such matters what he thinks Sinfull; though it be not so really in it self. But now this is by no means your Case as to the matter under Consideration; for as much as your Separation is Determined by the Holy Scriptures to be Sinfull; and also for as much as those Particulars, on pretence whereof you Separate from us, are such as (tho' Undetermined by the Scriptures, yet) are Determined by the Lawfull Authority of the Church: which Authority you ought to Submit and give a Preference to, before your own Private Perswasion.

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And thus I have answered such Objections as are commonly drawn by your Party from Texts of Scripture, and carry with them any shew of Argument. I proceed now to such other Objections made by you, as are not drawn from Scripture.

*Obj. 9.* You say then, that the Act of Toleration do's permit you to Separate from our Communion, and therefore you may Lawfully do it; and if Lawfully, then without Sin. Now the Act of Toleration is but a very poor Defence of your Separation, and can by no means justify it. For you must acknowledge, that 'tis not in the power of an Act of Parliament to make that to be no Sin, which God hath made Sinfull: and therefore since your Separation from our Church is (as this Paper proves) Sinfull according to the Scriptures, it will follow that the Act of Toleration cannot make it to become Unsinfull. And such a Notion, as you entertain of the Act of Toleration proceeds only from your Ignorance of the Design of the said Act, which do's by no means go about to justify your Separation, but only Frees you from such Civil Penalties, as the Separatists were before liable to, chiefly for some Politick Ends of the Civil Government, as is evident from the Preamble of the said Act. And therefore when you urge, that 'tis Lawfull for you to Separate, because the Laws of the Land allow you so to do, and what is Lawfull, cannot be Sinfull; you only put a great Fallacy or Cheat upon your self, for want of duely considering that the word Lawfull is capable of a Double meaning, of one as it is applied to the Laws of God, and of another as it is applied to the Laws of Man. Whatsoever is Lawfull in reference to the Laws of God, that indeed cannot be Sinfull; but a thing may be Lawfull in reference to Humane Laws, and yet be very Sinfull, because tho' it may be permitted by Humane Laws, yet it may be not permitted by the Laws of God. And this last Case is exactly the Case of Separation; which though it be permitted by the Act of Toleration, and on that account may be said to be Lawfull in reference to the Laws of the

the Land; yet is not permitted but forbid in Scripture, and therefore cannot be Lawfull, but Sinfull in reference to the Laws of God, whereby you must be judged at the Day of Judgement, when the Act of Toleration will by no means be a sufficient Plea to justify your Sin of Separation.

*Obj. 10.* Another Objection commonly made use of by you is, that our Manner of Divine Worship is not so Pure, as that observed in your Dissenting Conventicles. But this is no other than a downright Falshood; for I desire you to consider that the Worship of God can truly be said to be more or less Pure, only as it is more or less Agreeable to the Will of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Now I affirm, that our manner of Worship is as Agreeable to the Scriptures as yours is: forasmuch as nothing required by the Scriptures as Necessary to Divine Worship is Omitted, and nothing Forbid by the Scriptures is made Use of in our Divine Service. Well, but we have, you say, Some things, which though they are not forbid, yet neither are they required by the Scriptures, and therefore these might be let alone, especially since we do not read, that the Apostles used any such things. The weakness of this Objection might be shewn many ways: I shall choose to do it only by Retorning it upon your selves, that you likewise make use of Some things in your Worship, which though not forbid; yet neither are they required by the Scriptures. For instance, you have Pulpits for your Teachers, as we have for our Ministers: but now neither do the Scriptures forbid or require them, nor do we read that the Apostles were wont to Preach out of Pulpits. And having mentioned this instance wherein we and you Agree, I shall proceed to another wherein we Disagree, and shew that (though we use it and you do not, yet) our Worship is as Pure as yours; I mean the Surplice. For pray give me a good Reason if you can, why it should be less Pure for the Minister to pray or preach in a Surplice, because the Scriptures don't expressly require it, and the Apostles did not (likely) make use of



of it, than 'tis for the Minister to pray or preach in a Pulpit, since neither do the Scriptures require, nor did the Apostles make use of a Pulpit.

Obj. 11. Ay, but you further Object, that we agree with the Papists in the use of the Surplice, ( which therefore you are pleased to call the Rag of Popery ) and in many other things belonging to Divine Service. And so do you likewise agree with the Papists in the use of the Pulpit, ( which therefore may as aptly be called the Log of Popery ) and in many other things belonging to Divine Service. But pray consider, whether Any thing that is not Sinfull in it self, do's therefore become Sinfull, only because the Papists make use of it, or do the like. If so, then 'tis Sinfull for a Minister ( when he officiates ) not only to wear a Surplice upon his other Cloaths, but even to wear a Shirt under them; For I dare say, that the Popish Priests wear Shirts as well as Surplices. Nay, if this be true, then we must not Believe the Scriptures, must not Believe in Christ, because the Papists do the like. And is not this Admirable doctrine? Is not this enough to shew you the Absurdity of this Objection, invented and made use of by the Ring-leaders of your Party, only to deceive Ignorant and Unthinking People, to whom the name of Popery serves for a Scare-crow, whilst they know not what truly is or is not Popery.

Obj. 12. Another great Pretence for your Separation is that of *Better Edifying*: but this is no more than a mere Pretence. For the word *Edifying* do's denote in plain English the same as *Building up*, and is made use of on Account of the Church of Christ being frequently compared in the Scriptures to a Building or House. Now this Spiritual Building or Church of Christ being but one, therefore *To be Edified* must denote in the strictest and true Sense being made a *Part of that one Building*, or a Member of that One Church. And therefore 'tis impossible that any Teacher should Edifie you, who promotes a Separation, just as 'tis impossible to Build up any House by taking the  
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Stones and other Materials thereof, and putting of them into different Parcels, instead of Uniting or putting them together, whereby alone they can be Built up into a House.

But you will say, you don't know what the word *Edifying* may strictly signifie; but what you mean thereby is *Profiting* in Spiritual Knowledge. In answer hereto I must take the Freedom plainly to inform you, that the Truths of the Gospell and the several parts of saving Knowledge are by none more clearly and plainly laid open and taught, than by the Ministers of the Church of England. And therefore if you will not Profit in hearing our Ministers, as well as any other Teachers, the fault lies only at your own door; as proceeding only from Humour or Prejudice, or some such like Bad Principle; and consequently it can be no warrantable ground for your Separation.

Nay, I must go farther and tell you, that (strictly speaking) 'tis impossible for you to Profit by hearing your Schismatical Teachers; for as much as by so doing you Sin, and no Spiritual Profit can arise from Sin. In a word, you would do well seriously to remember, that Better Edifying or Profiting more in Knowledge, was the very Bait, which the Devil at first made use of to Deceive Adam and Eve; the motive whereby he perswaded them to Eat of the Forbidden Fruit being no other than this, that they should become more Wise or *Knowing* than they were afore; *Gen. 3. 5, 6.* How miserably our first Parents were deluded by this Specious Pretence of the Devil, I suppose you are not ignorant of; And I pray God that he would be pleased to give you a true and timely Sight of your own Folly, in suffering your self to be miserably seduced by the like Craftiness of the Devil.

*Obj. 13.* Proceed we next to that other Pretence for your Separation, that you cannot but think your Teacher to be a true Minister of Christ, because he is a Good Liver and preaches the Truths of the Gospel. As to the first Particular, your Teacher's being a Good Liver, surely that can be no Evidence of his being a True Minister of Christ:

*To a Dissenting Parishioner.* 33

Christ: for if so, then 'twill follow that every Good Liver is a True Minister of Christ, and consequently your self must be a True Minister of Christ, (which yet you know to be False.) since you are a Good Liver in the same sense as your Teacher is: namely, as a Good Liver signifies a Good Moral Man. But if by a Good Liver you mean a Good Christian, then neither you nor your Teacher can be allowed to be such: Forasmuch as you wilfully and industriously abett and promote what is most strictly forbidden by Christianity, I mean Division in the Church. See 1 Cor. 1. 10. and 3. 3. Eph. 4. 3. and 11. 18.

As to the other particular whereby you infer your Teacher to be a True Minister of Christ, viz. because he preaches the Truths of the Gospel: to this I answer, that a Man may preach up some Truths of the Gospel, and yet be far from being a True Minister of Christ (as for many other Reasons, so) because he may preach Down or against other Truths of the Gospel. And this is the Case of All your Teachers, who maintain and encourage Division in the Church contrary to one principal Doctrine of the Gospel. And pray consider, what is a more common way for Cheats to put off their bad wares, than by putting some good among them. And now I am upon the Life and Doctrine of your Teacher, I cannot but think it a proper Occasion to put you in mind of what is laid down in the Scriptures concerning the Lives and Doctrines of False Prophets or Teachers. Pray consider, that you are again and again informed in the Holy Scriptures, that the False Prophets, which should arise, should make use of an Outward Appearance of Extraordinary Piety, only that they might thereby the more easily seduce and mislead their Followers. Thus our Saviour forewarns you Mat. 7. 15. &c. To Beware of False Prophets, which come to you in Sheep's cloathing, but inwardly they are *Revering Wolves*. To which our Saviour adds an infallible Rule whereby to know such False Prophets, notwithstanding their Sheep's cloathing and outward shew of Sanctity, v. 16. *To shall know them by their Fruits*: where by Fruits cannot be understood their Good or Bad Lives, be-



cause our Saviour tells us, that they should appear Outwardly Good; but by their Fruits, are rationally to be understood the Effects of their Doctrine, which should always tend in the main or upshot to some Ill purpose or other. Accordingly these words are very applicable to the Discovery of your Teachers to be False Prophets; forasmuch as whatever Sanctity they make a shew of in their Behaviour, yet their Doctrine tends in the main to foment and nourish Division in the Church. To this Character of False Prophets given by our Saviour may be added that of St. Paul, 2 Cor. II. v. 13. *Etc. For such are False Apostles, Deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ.* Mark, I beseech you, St. Paul expressly makes it one part of the Character of False Apostles, that they should transform (or in appearance change) themselves into the Apostles of Christ; and he gives also a very natural account of their so doing in the two Verses following; *And no marvel; For Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light: therefore it is no great thing, if his Ministers also be transformed as the Ministers of Righteousness.* And if you look back to the beginning of this Chapter, you may thence gather, that the Artifices, whereby these False Apostles did then seduce the People, were much the same made use of by the Dissenting Teachers now adays; namely, the Pretence of *Better Edification*, as you may learn from v. 3. of the fore-cited 2 Cor. II. (compared with what is said at the end of the fore-going Objection, concerning the Method whereby our First Parents were deceived;) as also of being *more Powerfull Preachers*, as you may learn from Verse 6. as also of Preaching the Gospel *Freely and without reward*, as you may learn from Verse 7. to v. 12. In short, so great an Agreement is there between the Artifices made use of by the False Teachers of St. Paul's time and your Dissenting Teachers, that 'tis too evident they are acted by much the same Principle; and notwithstanding they may be transformed as Ministers of Righteousness, yet you may hence see, that they may all the while be no other in reality or effect than Ministers of Satan; and out of the greatest Charity to them, I heartily

pray

pray God to give them a due sense, whose work they carry on by their causing and promoting Division in the Church.

Lastly, (to allow this your Argument All the Force you can desire to have it allowed) if to be a Good Liver and to Preach the Truths of the Gospel be an Infallible sign of a True Minister of Christ, then you are bound by your own Argument to look on Me as a True Minister: forasmuch as through the Grace of God I dare boldly call upon you, to lay any thing to my charge, which may make me deserve not to be esteemed as Good a Liver as your Teacher, or not to preach the Truths of the Gospel as Faithfully as he doth. Since therefore you must acknowledge Me by your own Argument to be a True Minister of Christ, I call upon you further to give me (if you can) a good Argument for forsaking One who is a True Minister of Christ, and who is placed over you according to the Laws of God and this Realm.

*Obj. 14.* To the foregoing Plea taken from the Good Behaviour of your Dissenting Teachers (the weakness whereof hath been evidently shewn to you) I subjoyn the Objection taken from the Bad Lives of some of our Ministers, as if they were for that Reason not the Ministers of Christ. The weakness of which Objection I might shew at large, by proving that a Man may be a very Bad Man, and yet a very True Minister; particularly from the instance of *Judas*: as also by Retorting the Objection upon your own Party, forasmuch as there are to be found among your Teachers as Bad Livers as amongst our Ministers. But I judge it needless, and dare Appeal to your own Conscience, whether upon mature Deliberation you are not convinced therein, that the Bad Life of any Other Minister cannot be a sufficient Reason for your withdrawing your self from your Own Parish-Minister, whom you cannot Accuse as being a Bad Liver.

*Obj. 15.* Another Plea used by your Party is, that you are (though not in Communion, yet) in Charity with

us; and that as a token of such your Charity, you do not scruple now and then (as Occasion requires) to come to our Publick Service. Neighbour, as to this Practice of your Party commonly called *Occasional Conformity*, it is so far from Justifying your Separation, or Lessening your Crime therein, that on the contrary it renders it most Inexcusable. For by such Occasional Conformity you plainly own, that there is nothing in our Publick Service, but what you *Can* joyn with us in, if you *Will*; and therefore your not coming to our Publick Service Constantly must proceed from no better motive than Willfulness or Obstinacy, at least not out of a Conscientious fear of Sinning thereby. For such a Conscientious fear would not give you leave to come so much as Now and Then to our Publick Service, if you really thought there was any thing in it which is Sinfull.

And as for your being (though not in constant Communion, yet) in Charity with us, neither do's this any ways warrant your Separation, or so much as render it the more Excusable. For pray, Neighbour, consider, whether it would be an Allowable Excuse, should a Son tell his Father, or a Pupil or Scholar tell his Tutor or Master, that he do's not think fit to obey his Commands or follow his Directions, but however is in Charity with him. I dare say you cannot possibly bring your self to think, that the Son's or Scholar's thus alledging himself to be in Charity with his Father or Master would truly excuse either the one or the other from paying due Obedience to their respective Superiours and Guides. But now yours is the like Case. For the Bishops or Governours of our Church are your Spiritual Fathers or Guides in chief; and therefore your being in Charity with Them or with Those of their Communion cannot satisfie for or excuse your refusing to pay that Obedience to their Orders and Directions as you ought to pay: the Observance of One Christian duty will by no means make amends for the Neglect or Breach of Another; and therefore your being in Charity with us, will not excuse your not being in Communion with us. Besides, Neighbour,



I must earnestly beg you to allow your self due time for an Impartial Examination of your own heart, whether you may not possibly Deceive your self, whilst you thus think that you are truly in Charity with us. That there is too much ground to suppose that you may possibly be thus Deceived, you your self must acknowledge, if you are not altogether ignorant, what manner of Charity your Presbyterian Brethren in the late Great Rebellion between 1640 and 1660, shewed to the Episcopal Party in This Kingdom; not to mention the Extraordinary Charity shewn at this very Present by your Brethren to the Episcopal Party in a Kingdom not remote. Are you assured, that were your Circumstances the Same with Those of your Brethren aforementioned, that your Charity would not be likewise the Same? I am very well assured, that 'tis but very Reasonable to conclude, that the Same Principles attended with the Same Circumstances will always produce the Same Charity. And since this must be allowed to be a very Reasonable Conclusion, I shall leave you to Judge, whether Such a Charity can be any Proper Means to Lessen the Guilt or Danger of your Separation, and whether on the contrary there is not too much Ground for us to pray, that God of his Mercy would evermore keep you and your Party from the Opportunity of Shewing, and us or the Episcopal Party from the Calamity of feeling Such Charity.

*Obj.* 16. I come now to the Last Plea you are wont to make use of, and which therefore I have reserved for the last place: namely, that you Mean well, and would Fain do the Best. Now any Papist or any other Misguided Person will say the same: and you must Remember, that though God will undoubtedly make Allowances for Uprightness of Intention, where Use has been made of All due Means prescribed by God for understanding the Truth, yet this cannot be looked upon to be your Case, who refuse to make Use of the Ordinary means appointed by God for your Instruction, because you refuse to be guided by your Parish-Minister, whom God hath appointed to guide

you in all Points of Difficulty. I cannot better enforce this Admonition to you, than with the Words of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 3. 16. *In which (namely the Epistles of St. Paul) are some things hard to be understood, which they that are Unlearned and Unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own Destruction.* Hence you may learn, that though there are Some things in the Scriptures hard to be understood, especially by you that are Unlearned, yet if through your Unstability you leave your True Teachers, and having itching Ears (as St. Paul 2 Tim. 4. 3. speaks) choose to your self other Teachers, and by their Means and False Instructions wrest and misapply the Scriptures; your Unlearnedness shall be no Excuse for your Errors before God, but your thus misapplying the Scriptures shall turn even to your own Final Destruction: which God of his infinite mercy grant may not be your Case.

I have now gone through those Objections or Pleas commonly made use of by you and your Party; which carry in them so much as a shew of Argument: at least I think at present there is no Objection or Plea of Moment, but what may be reduced to some of the foregoing ones, which have been already Answered. As for what Some are apt to say, that they *don't like* our way of Worship, as well as others, or *don't Fancy* it, or are *very Well Satisfied* with what they do &c. Such Arguments will justify a Man's being an Heathen as well as his being a Separatist. For an Heathen may say, that he doth not Like or Fancy the Christian Religion as well as his Own, or that He is very well satisfied with his own Religion: and these must be allowed to be sufficient Arguments for Heathenism, if they are so for a Separation. And I think no more need be said to shew the Insufficiency of Such Arguments.

*Obj. 17.* But besides the Common Objections already mentioned, there are Some made use of by you, which have a more Particular and Immediate Relation to my self, and which therefore I shall here answer. Thus you Object, that I bring up New Ceremonies, which you  
never

never remember to be used Afore in your Church. This Objection makes Not Against, but For me. Since the New Ceremonies you mean, are no other than what our Church enjoyns Me and the Rest of the Clergy to make use of: and therefore the Fault must lie, not in their being Brought up Now, but in their being Laid down Before.

Obj. 18. You further Object, that I am not Long enough in my Prayer before Sermon, or in the Sermon it self. Sure I am, I need not be Long in Answering this Objection. Pray what Text have you to prove, that a Prayer or Sermon doth not hold out good Measure, unless it holds out the whole Run of an Hourglass? The Prayer I use before Sermon, is never shorter than the Lord's Prayer; and my Sermon is ( I dare say ) never shorter than our Saviour's Sermon on the mount: and He that dares to Dislike those most Divine Compositions, I would not have Such an One to Like any thing of mine.

Obj. 19. But this is not all, I Read my Sermons too: an Objection which scarce deserves any other Answer than a, *Why not?* However I ask, Are not the Scriptures Read to you? or, Are they ever the less Powerfull for being Read? No certainly: and if not, then why should a Sermon, which is nothing else but an Explication of Some part of the Scriptures, be the less Powerfull for being Read? What strange Malignity is there in Pen, Ink, and Paper, that they can make a thing otherwise Good to become in a manner good for Nothing! Besides, if the Virtue of a Sermon be lost by its being Written or Read, why then do some of your zealous Brethren use so much Industry in Taking Notes after your Teachers, and Repeating them to their Families when they come home? What, have you got among you a peculiar Sort of Pen, Ink, and Paper, that will keep the virtue of Sermons better than what is used by other Folk? In short, either the Reading of such Notes do's profit them that hear them Read, or do's not profit them: If it doth not profit them, why then do your Brethren take the Pains



to Write and Read them? If it do's profit them, then you overthrow your own Objection, because you grant that a Sermon may Profit, tho' it be Writ and Read.

Obj. 20. There is still one more Objection behind, which is that I do not Preach in the Afternoon on Sundays, but only *Expond the Catechism*. Pray consider, what is *Exponding the Catechism*, but Teaching the Chief Doctrines of Christianity; and consequently, what is it but Preaching? So that the upshot of this Objection comes to this, that *I do not Preach* in the Afternoons and *I do Preach*. Well, but if it be Preaching, 'tis not such a Sort of Preaching as you Like. Sure I am that this Sort of Preaching is never the worse for your not Liking it, but you your self are much the worse for not doing so. This sort of Preaching is esteemed to be most Edifying (for which Reason I make use of it) by all Judicious Men, and even by many of your own Party, who I know will come elsewhere to Church to hear the Catechism Expounded, though they will not come on other accounts. From whence I observe, that notwithstanding the great Noise you make about Edifying, yet you are not agreed among your selves, wherein it consists, or which is the most likely Method of preaching for to Edifie; but that you are altogether led in this matter by Humour and Fancy, and that Edifying is nothing else but another word for Pleasing your own Humour and Fancy, and consequently no warrantable Motive for your Separation.

And thus I have briefly shewn the Folly and Absurdity of those few Objections made use of by you, which do more particularly and immediately concern my self. And yet I shall not stop here, but in order to convince you (if possible) that I am acted only by a sincere and hearty Concern for your Spiritual Welfare, and also in order to bring you (if possible) out of your Erroneous and Sinfull Separation, I do hereby acquaint you, that upon good and solemn Assurance given me, that You and All the rest of your Brethren within my Parish will thereupon altogether keep close to your Parish Church for the future,

I will not refuse to Comply even with your Humours in what lies within my own Power, viz. in Lengthening both my Prayer before Sermons, and my Sermon also, and not only so, but in Preaching even without Book &c. And this I will do on the same Motive which influenced St. Paul in a like Case: namely, *that I may cut off occasion from them that desire occasion, that wherein they Glory, they may be found even as we.* 2 Cor. 11. 12. I have no more to add in reference to the Arguments made use of by you and your Party, than this; that if there be Any Arguments which make for you, and are not answered by Any thing said in this Paper, upon information thereof I shall be most ready to give you Satisfaction therein.

Having then, Neighbour, largely proved to you under the three First Heads, that you are indispensably obliged to Obey and Submit to the Rulers of our Church, and consequently to joyn in Communion with us; and having also proved under the Fourth Head, that the Objections and Pleas made use of Against Us and For your Selves, are grounded on Texts of Scripture wrongly applied, or on some other wrong Notions taken up by you: it only remains now by way of Conclusion, with all the Love and Kindness of a Christian, with all the Earnest Concern and tender Compassion of a Spiritual Pastor towards a wandering Sheep, to Advise and Admonish, Exhort and Intreat you, that you would not any longer hazard your Eternal Welfare, by continuing in your Separation from our True and Apostolical Church; but that you would without Delay break off your Sinfull Practice, and by the Grace of God recover your self out of the Snare of the Devil, *who* (through the cunning of those his Evil Instruments, that know how to transform themselves as Ministers of Righteousness) *takes you Captive at his Will.* 2 Tim. 2. 26. and that you would without delay reconcile your self to the Church, and so become a true Member of Christ the Head of the Church, and through him be reconciled to God. I beseech you, Neighbour, to consider again and again those words of St. James,

*whosoever*

whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law; and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of All: For he that ſaid, do not commit Adultery, ſaid alſo, do not Kill: Now if thou commit no Adultery, yet if thou Kill, thou art become a Tranſgreſſour of the Law. Jam. 2. v. 10. &c. In like manner, He that hath forbid Murder, hath forbid alſo Diviſions in the Church; if therefore you commit no Murder, yet if you cauſe or promote Diviſions in the Church, you become a Tranſgreſſour of the Law, and conſequently can no more expect to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, till you repent of ſuch your Sin in promoting Diviſion, than a Murderer can, till he repents of the Murder he is guilty of.

Moreover I beſeech you, Neighbour, to be very careful that you deal Sincerely, and do not ſuffer any thing to ſway or bias you ſo far as not to read and weigh the Arguments here offered you with all requiſite Impartiality. Conſider again and again thoſe words of our Saviour Mat. 16. 26. *What ſhall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?* and therefore let not any Temporal Advantages ſo far influence you for the preſent, as to make you not have a due concern for the Future Wellfare of your Soul. Further I muſt take the freedom to forewarn you in a more eſpecial manner, that the Fear of Shame in Owning your ſelf to have been in an Error, do not keep you from being Sincerely willing to Discover your Error, and much more from Acknowledging it when diſcovered. You may poſſibly be now thought and cried up by thoſe of your Party, to be a Perſon of great Piety, and much Enlighten'd with God's Grace; and therefore after all to Own your ſelf to have been in a Sinfull Error, is indeed a great Piece of Self-denial, and which the Pride of corrupted Nature will diſſwade and keep you from, if you conſult only Fleſh and Blood, and hearken not to the Calls of Duty, and earneſtly Pray for God's Grace and Aſſiſtance to overcome all ſuch Temptations.

Neighbour, Thoſe Words of St. Paul in reference to the Jews, Rom. 10. v. 1, 2. (*Brethren, my Heart's deſire and Prayer to God for Iſrael is, that they might be ſaved. For, I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according*



Knowledge: ) seem very applicable to You and Me. It is my Heart's desire and prayer that you might be Saved: and I do bear you record, that you have a zeal of God, but ( then 'tis also, as the Jews was ) not according to Knowledge, that is, not Such as is agreeable to the Right Understanding of the Gospel, and therefore not Such an one as will secure your Salvation. Now the whole Design of this Paper is only to set right that Zeal you have of God, that it may be according to the true knowledge of the Gospel, and consequently that it may be such a Zeal as will save you.

If God peradventure will give you Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth ( for so doubtfully do's St. Paul himself speak in a like Case, 2 Tim. 2. 25. ) I shall together with the Holy Angels rejoyce over you with exceeding great Joy: but if otherwise, I shall however reap the Satisfaction and Comfort of having discharged the Duty of a Faithfull Shepherd and Watchman, inasmuch as I have plainly and timely warned you of the Danger you are in, and not only so, but have done it after such a Method, as ( if duely made use of ) cannot but be much more Beneficial to you than Discourses by word of Mouth, and that for the following Reasons:

In Discourfing by word of Mouth there is not Leisure enough duely to weigh the Arguments offered, which therefore may lose a great deal of their Force by being not rightly or fully understood: whereas when the Arguments are committed to Paper, they may ( as Leisure shall happen ) be considered again and again, till they are understood Truly and Fully.

Besides a great part of what is said by word of Mouth, is apt to be Forgot in no long time, or at best not remember'd exactly enough: and hence there is usually Occasion given for discourfing over again and again the very same Points that have been handled afore, and so little or no Progress is made: whereas what is committed to Paper, is committed as it were to an Artificial Memory, which will faithfully and exactly keep what is so committed to it, for a long, long time, even for a Man's whole

whole life: and therefore all Occasion of Repeating the Same over and over again being hereby taken away, the several Points in Controversy may be quickly gone over, and the Matter brought to a much quicker Issue.

Further, whilst your Objections against our Communion lie only in your Head, and as it were confusedly in an Heap, you may possibly think them to be more Numerous than they are; and though you may (as you Urge them in Discourse one after another) be satisfied for the present as to the weakness of several of them, yet after the Discourse is over, you may not trouble your self to remember exactly, how many of your Objections have received satisfactory Answers even in your own Opinion, & so in a short time you may confound those that have been Answered with the others that have not yet been spoken to, and so look upon all as still remaining yet Unanswered, and on your self as being still at as great a Distance from us, as you were at the very first: whereas when all that you have to Object or Plead, is drawn out upon Paper into one View, it may possibly appear not to be near so much as you imagin'd it to be; and also when the Objections and Answers are placed one by the other, such Objections as you cannot but acknowledge to be satisfactorily Answered, may be easily mark'd, and so it may be visibly discern'd, how the Number of Objections do lessen, and that there is not by much so great a Difference remaining between us, as there was at first, and perhaps so very little, that you your self may see it to be very Unreasonable for to Separate any longer from us on so small an Account.

Lastly, your Employment calls you much from Home; and when you are at Home, you may not be at leisure by reason of the Necessary Concerns of Life, or may be indisposed by reason of the Business of the Day past; whence it comes about, that 'tis not easy to light upon proper Opportunities for our Enttring into a Discourse concerning matters of Such Importance: whereas this Paper may be present with you Abroad as well as at Home, and may attend all fit Opportunities either in the Field or  
House;

House; and by your perusing it at such times you may reap the Same Advantage, as if I my self were always present with you and instructing you. For though it should happen, that ( notwithstanding my great Endeavour to express my self as plainly as possible) some Passages however may occur in this Paper, which you cannot rightly apprehend of your self, these may be marked, till your Affairs will permit you to come to me, who ( you know) am most generally at Home; and when I am there, shall Always be at leisure to give you all the Instruction and Assistance I can, in setting forward your Eternal Salvation; and as such I shall close all with that Petition of our Excellent Litany,

*That it may please thee to bring into the way of Truth  
All such as have Erred and are Deceived,*

*We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord.*

*So prays without ceasing*

*Your Faithful Servant in Christ*

*Cotesbach Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*1705.*

**EDW. WELLS.**

**POST-**



# POSTSCRIPT.

**N**OT judging it Convenient to enlarge the foregoing Letter to a Greater Length, I have omitted Several Particulars (which might otherwise have been very well Insisted upon) till another Opportunity or Occasion, contenting my self at present to exhibit some short Heads thereof to your Serious Consideration; in the Specimen or Table following, viz.

## *A Specimen or Short Table,*

### I. Of the Disagreement between the Dissenters Own Principles and Practices.

#### The Dissenters Principles.

1. *Liberty of Conscience and the Free Exercise of Religion in their Own manner, ought not to be Denied to Any Sort of Protestants.*

2. *Humane Ordinances are not to be Allowed of in Religious matters: and therefore the Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England (viz. Good-Friday, Ash-Wednesday, 30th of Jan. &c. Christ's Birth, Circumcision, &c. The Festivals of the Apostles, 29th of May, &c.) are not to be observed, as being Humane Ordinances.*

3. *Kneeling at the Sacrament is not to be Allowed of, as being Popish and Superstitious.*

#### The Dissenters Practices.

1. *The Dissenters, when they have Power, do notwithstanding deny Liberty of Conscience or the Free Exercise of Religion in their Own manner to the Episcopal Protestants: witness the Time of the Late Great Rebellion, and the Present Affairs in Another Kingdom.*

2. *The Dissenters do notwithstanding Allow of Humane Ordinances in Religious matters; and do most Religiously observe the Fifth of November, and the Fast-days and Festivals or Thanksgiving-days appointed in Relation to the Present War, though they be no other than Humane Ordinances.*

3. *The Dissenters do notwithstanding Kneel at the Sacrament, in order to Qualify themselves for Places or Offices.*

4. 'Tis Superstitious and Popish, to Adorn Churches or make them Fine or Beautifull.

5. 'Tis not Good or Expedient, to Symbolize or Agree with the Papists in Religious matters, or in the manner of Divine Worship.

4. Several Meeting-houses of the Dissenters of late years erected, are notwithstanding built much more Stately and Fine than most of our Parish Churches.

5. The Dissenters do notwithstanding Symbolize or Agree with the Papists in Religious matters, and particularly in the manner of Divine Worship; as will appear from the Particulars specified in the second part of this Table: viz.

## II. Of the Agreement between Some Principles and Practices of the Dissenters and Papists.

### Some Principles and Practices of the Papists.

1. The Papists make it their Business to Seduce and Draw off the People from the Communion of the Church of England.

2. 'Tis the Practice of the Popish Priests, viz. Friars, Jesuits, &c. to Preach without Book.

3. Praying without Form or Extempore was brought up by one Commin a Popish Friar, in order to Draw off the People from Liking the Common Prayer, and so to promote the ends of Popery; for which he was Amply Rewarded by the Pope.

4. One Thomas Heath a Popish Jesuit confessed upon Examination, that he had been Six years in England labouring to refine the Protestants, and to take off all Smacks of Ceremonies, and to make the Church Purer.

### Some Principles and Practices of the Dissenters.

1. The Dissenters make it their Business to do the very Same.

2. 'Tis likewise the Practice of the Dissenting Teachers to Preach without Book.

3. Praying without Form or Extempore is still kept up by the Dissenting Teachers, in order to Draw off People from Liking the Common Prayer, whereby they much promote the ends of Popery, and for which the Pope owes them Many Thanks.

4. The Dissenting Teachers (learning this Artifice from the said Popish Priest) still make use of the like Pleas Against the Ceremonies of the Church of England, and of Greater Purity in their Own manner of Worship, to deceive

5. The Papists pretend to Miracles and Extraordinary Gifts; and that their Chief Guide, the Pope, is Inspired or more Immediately Assisted and Directed by the Spirit.

deceive the People, and so draw them off from the Communion of our Church.

5. The Dissenters likewise pretend, that their Teachers are more Spiritually Gifted than our Episcopal Clergy, and that their Guides are (Many, if not All of them) Inspired or more Immediately Assisted and Directed by the Spirit. Whence arises

#### N. B. One Remarkable Difference between the Dissenters and Papists.

The Papists acknowledge but One (viz. the Chief) of their Spiritual Guides to be Inspired or more Immediately Assisted and Directed by the Spirit, and Him they call the Pope.

The Dissenters pretend, that Many (if not All) of their Spiritual Guides are Inspired or more Immediately Assisted and Directed by the Spirit, and so have among them Many Popes.

#### THE CONCLUSION.

Since it thus appears from the foregoing Specimen that All the Adversaries of the Church of England promote the Same Common End, viz. Popery, and that by many the Same Common Artifices; it ought therefore to be duly Considered, whether They may not All be very Properly and Truly comprehended in General under the Common Name of Papists, and so be subdistinguished into Roman-Catholick Papists on one hand, and on the other hand into Fanatical-Papists, otherwise called Dissenters.

Pray lay this seriously to Heart and Consider, that whilst you perhaps think your selves most Averse and Opposite to Popery, you are on the contrary taking the Right and most Ready way to Bring in Popery upon us: unless it please God to give you by This or some Other means a Timely Sight and Conviction of your Fatal Error; which God of his Infinite Mercy grant for Jesus Christ his Sake.

Amen.

F I N I S.





